

REMARKS

This Reply, filed in response to the Office Action mailed January 29, 2009 is believed to address each and every issue raised in the Action. A favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Claim Status

Claims 1-12 are pending in the application and no claims are amended. Claims 13 and 14 are newly added and support for these claims can be found in the Examples (see, e.g., paragraph [0029] in particular) and paragraph [0016] of the specification.

Formal Matters

Applicants thank the Examiner for acknowledging Applicants' claim for foreign priority and that all certified copies of the priority documents have been received. Applicants further thank the Examiner for considering the references submitted in IDS on December 30, 2005 and August 3, 2006.

Response to Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

On page 2 of the Action, the Examiner rejects claims 1-3, 5, 6, and 9-12 as being unpatentable over Ueda (JP 59-196338) and further in view of Imamura (US 3,913,652) and Scriver (US 4,192,366). On page 3, claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ueda, Scriver, and Imamura as applied in claim 1 above and further in view of Inui (US 5,191,003). On page 3, claims 1-6 and 8-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Segatta (US 5,396,940) and further in view of Imamura and Scriver.

Applicants respectfully traverse.

The present invention is directed towards a rubber composition with excellent durability and processability. The present rubber composition comprises a polyisoprene rubber with a cis

1,4 bond content of 99.0% and above, a cis 3,4 bond content that is not over 0.5%, and a Mooney viscosity of 20-100, and natural rubber.

In contrast, Ueda generally discloses a cis 1,4 bond content of isoprene rubber and/or natural rubber of 90.0% and above. However, Ueda fails to specifically disclose a cis 1,4 bond content of 99.0% and above in the specification, and furthermore, Ueda fails to disclose anything about the cis 3,4 bond content of the isoprene rubber. Also, in the experimental data in Ueda, natural rubber is disclosed, but isoprene rubber is not.

Scriver discloses a cis 1,4 bond content of isoprene rubber of 96-99%, but Scriver's experimental data only discloses a cis 1,4 bond content of 98%. Furthermore, Scriver fails to disclose anything about the cis 3,4 bond content of the isoprene rubber.

Imamura discloses a cis 1,4 bond content of isoprene rubber of 95% and above, but Imamura's experimental data only teaches a cis 1,4 bond content of 97%. Furthermore, Imamura is silent with regard to anything about the cis 3,4 bond content of the isoprene rubber.

Segatta only discloses a cis 1,4 bond content of 97%, and fails to teach anything about the cis 3,4 bond content of the isoprene rubber.

In view thereof, none of the cited references specifically disclose an isoprene rubber with a cis 1,4 bond content of 99.0% and above. Furthermore, all the references fail to disclose anything about the cis 3,4 bond content. As disclosed in the present application, when the cis 3,4 bond content is greater than 0.5%, the extension crystallinity is harmed and dynamic properties are deteriorated. (See para [0015]).

Additionally, the instant Examples compare the present invention with an embodiment containing IR2200, which has a cis 1,4 bond content of 98.0% (corresponding to the highest

amount disclosed in a specific Example in the cited art), demonstrating the higher wear resistance and durability of the instant composition. (See Table 1).

Thus, the Examiner has failed to present a prima facie case of obviousness as one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been led to use the presently claimed combination of not less than 99% cis 1,4 bond content with 0.5% or less cis 3,4 bond content isoprene rubbers. Moreover the present invention is not obvious because it provides unexpectedly superior results.

In accordance therewith, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejections of claims 1-12.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Bruce E. Kramer
Registration No. 33,725

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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